Update on NSFW content

July 24, 2025 · by leafo (@moonscript)

♡ Like 2675 Share this post: + Follow itch.io

Update July 28th, 2025: Addendum FAQ

Update July 31st, 2025: Reindexing adult NSFW content

We have “deindexed” all adult NSFW content from our browse and search pages. We understand this action is sudden and disruptive, and we are truly sorry for the frustration and confusion caused by this change.

Recently, we came under scrutiny from our payment processors regarding the nature of some content hosted on itch.io. Due to a game titled *No Mercy*, which was temporarily available on itch.io before being banned back in April, the organization Collective Shout launched a campaign against Steam and itch.io, directing concerns to our payment processors about the nature of certain content found on both platforms.

Our ability to process payments is critical for every creator on our platform. To ensure that we can continue to operate and provide a marketplace for all developers, we must prioritize our relationship with our payment partners and take immediate steps towards compliance.

This is a time critical moment for itch.io. The situation developed rapidly, and we had to act urgently to protect the platform's core payment infrastructure. Unfortunately, this meant it was not realistic to provide creators with advance notice before making this change. We know this is not ideal, and we apologize for the abruptness of this change.

We are currently conducting a comprehensive audit of content to ensure we can meet the requirements of our payment processors. Pages will remain deindexed as we complete our review. Once this review is complete, we will introduce new compliance measures. For NSFW pages, this will include a new step where creators must confirm that their content is allowable under the policies of the respective payment processors linked to their account.

Part of this review will see some pages being permanently removed from itch.io. Affected accounts will be notified via their account's email address from our support address. You can reply to that email if you have any follow up questions.

We ask for your patience and understanding as we navigate this challenging period. I'm sorry we can not share more at this time as we are still getting a full understanding of the situation ourselves. We will post a follow up on our blog if the situation changes.

Thank you.

Addendum FAQ July 28th

It's an understatement to say the original announcement received a lot of response. I'm adding a FAQ here to address some of the most common concerns I've seen.

Why was itch.io's response greater than Steam's?

The difference in our responses stems from the difference in our platforms. Steam is a "closed" platform where every product page is approved before it appears on the store. Because they were generally aware of the content they host, they could identify and act on specific pages.

itch.io is an open, "UGC" (User-Generated Content) platform. With over 2 million product pages, anyone can publish content at any time with minimal barriers. We could not rely on user-provided tagging to be accurate enough for a targeted approach, so a broader review was necessary to be thorough.

Additionally, itch.io is a small company, both in team size and in transaction volume, compared to a company like Steam. We have limited ability to "push back."

If we lose our ability to accept payments from a partner like PayPal or Stripe, we impact the ability of all creators to do business. Losing PayPal, for instance, would prevent us from sending payouts to many people. Our actions were taken to protect our payment processing abilities for as much of the platform as possible.

What is the timeline for these changes?

The situation is evolving as we await final determinations from our current payment processors, Stripe and PayPal. There are still unknowns that prevent us from providing a fixed timeline.

In the meantime, we are actively reaching out to other payment processors that are more willing to work with this kind of content. We have suspended the ability to pay with Stripe for 18+ content for the foreseeable future. Our immediate focus has been on content classification reviews and implementing stricter age-gating on the site.

Can you elaborate on library access?

Pages that are “deindexed” are still accessible if you own them. They have not been removed from your library or collections.

Some pages have received a “content notice,” which applies to individual pages where our team has concluded we can no longer support their business. If you previously purchased or received a download key for one of these pages, the downloadable files are still available in your library, assuming the creator has not taken down the page or removed the files themselves.

We are aware of some people making claims that content has been removed from their library on social media. If you are one of those people we strongly urge you to reach out to support so we can understand what exactly you’re expecting to see as none of the changes we’ve made as part of this review should impact your access to paid products.

Regardless of what happens, I personally recommend you maintain control over the content you own. itch.io is a DRM-free platform from day 1 for this reason. Download and backup your games and don’t let any corporation dictate what you can own.

Can you elaborate on payouts?

Some have noted a rule in our adult content policy about not processing payouts for infringing accounts. This rule has been in place for a long time to address bad-actor situations where a user joins the site and blatantly violates our terms to make sales before being banned (There are content types we have ways had zero tolerance for, e.g., content with sexualized minors or sexualized real-life imagery). In those cases, we ban the user, refund payments, and do not honor payouts.

The current situation is a special circumstance. We have no interest in withholding anyone's earnings. The measures we are taking now are to ensure we do not lose our relationships with our financial partners, which is necessary to continue paying creators without issue.

Can you elaborate on the new items in the adult content policy?

Our adult content policy is located here:
https://itch.io/docs/creators/faq#is-adult-content-allowed

Our TOS and adult content policy have always included the rule: "If you plan to collect money for your content, then you must adhere to the acceptable use policy of all respective payment processors that your account utilizes." This is vague. The other day, we added a specific list of prohibited themes present in card processing networks to help people understand the kinds of things we might be looking for in our review.

We understand the problems that come with a list like this, as it's easy to argue the semantics. We decided it was better to give you more information to work with instead of less, even if many of the items on the list can be argued either way. We intend to refine this part of the site with

more care, but since there are still unknowns, this is the information we can provide for now.

Support this post Did you like this post? Tell us

♡ Like 2675

What is itch.io?

itch.io is an **open marketplace for independent game creators.** It's completely free to upload your content. Read more about what we're trying to accomplish and the features we provide.

Developer guides

Overview

Frequently asked questions

Host a game sale

Host a game bundle

Embed your game with a widget

Pay what you want pricing

How buying works

Host a game jam

More updates

itch.io changelog: Library & Recommendations enhancements, improved jam browsing, & more

Nov 13, 2019 ♥ 56

Return of the itch.io changelog: Markdown, Sub Prducts, Jam Updates & more

Oct 23, 2019 ♥ 43

Join the itch.io community translation project

Feb 04, 2019 ♥ 43

Announcing the itch.io Winter Sale!

Dec 18, 2018 ♥ 24

Announcing the itch.io Black Friday Not-Sale!

Nov 15, 2018 ♥ 72

Announcing the itch.io Halloween Sale and itch.io Selects Bundle!

Oct 25, 2018 ♥ 12

Get your game on with the GitHub Game Off!

Oct 24, 2018 ♥ 21

Devlogs: Post types, enhanced browsing, and more

Sep 05, 2018 ♥ 40